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ABSTRACT

The recent spate of national studies about schools is largely based on analyses of what schools do, how they do it, what the results are, and what they ought to be doing in light of present and future demands. Recommendations from these studies appear to fall into four categories of structure changes, content changes, value changes, and people changes. While the recommendations often differ, some common elements can be found in them, including visions of what schools need to do, dissatisfaction with the current state of schools, the belief that the teacher is vital for improvement in the schools, and concerns that teachers are not up to this challenge. Eight characteristics that bear on teacher education can be derived from the national studies. Teachers should: (1) be well-educated; (2) be intellectually curious and interested in others; (3) be knowledgeable in the subject matter taught; (4) support the essential character of American society; (5) understand how students learn; (6) be the pedagogical manager or "coach" in the learning process; (7) be a continuous learner; and (8) look forward to a teaching career. Each of these characteristics is discussed in terms of its implications for teacher preparation. (CB)

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Recent Reports on Education: Some Implications for Preparing Teacher

Outline of remarks delivered to
The National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education
New York City - October 18, 1984
by
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A. The Spate of Studies

1. The recent spate of national studies about schools are largely based on analyses of what schools do, how they do it, what the results are, and what they ought to be doing in light of present and future demands.

2. Recommendations from these studies seem to fall into four categories:
   a) structure changes (e.g., finances, salaries, time schedules, special arrangements);
   b) content changes (e.g., curriculum, courses, homework, academic requirements);
   c) value changes (e.g., traditional - return to the past; forward-looking to the future; combinations of old and new); and,
   d) people changes (largely about teachers, calling for quality without a consensus of what it means).

3. While there are many different recommendations - some differing from others, some to the point of conflict - there are common elements on which these recommendations are based:
   a) <u>visions</u> of what schools need to do and why;
   b) <u>dissatisfactions</u> with the current state of schools vis-a-vis what the future will demand of them;
   c) views that the <u>teacher</u> is the vital agent for improving instruction and learning, and the key ingredient to better instruction in schools;

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d) concerns that teachers are <u>not</u> up to this challenge, largely because they are not well enough prepared and also because current conditions in schools are not conducive to enabling teachers to meet it.

B. <u>The Common Elements and General Implications for Preparing Teachers</u>

1. <u>The Vision</u> - you cannot build something (the school) or prepare someone to do something (to teach) unless there is a <u>vision</u> of what it is you are building or preparing someone to do and knowing why. The recommendations in the reports deal as much with "what ought to be" as they do with "what is." To deal with them, it is necessary:

   a) to know what schools should be like and why before recommending any plans to prepare teachers to work in them;

   b) therefore, teacher education needs to know what schools should be like and why, and not simply to relate to what schools currently are like and currently need in the way of teachers. In short, teacher education, too, needs a vision - realistic, yes, but enlightened as well.

2. <u>The Dissatisfaction with schools</u> - The dissatisfaction stems largely from the various and sometimes different visions of the future that are held by those who engaged in the studies and what they perceive the future means for schools and teachers. In any event, any plans or recommendations for preparing teachers should:

   - <u>first</u>, start with the reexamination of what the policies and principles are that undergird the current program of teacher education - which ones seem to "fit" the particular future and which ones do not.

- second, be followed by an assessment of what is missing -- what new policies and principles need to be originated, which ones need to be revised or changed for the future, and which ones should be discarded; and,
- third, be designed with a strategy for implementation that will allow for evolving the necessary changes in a realistic, efficient and expeditious fashion.

3. Assuming that it is the teacher who is the vital agent for instruction and for improving learning, the plans for change for collegiate-based teacher education need to consider two major issues:
   a) What ought to be the shape and substance, procedures and processes for preparing teachers and, in that regard, what ought to be:
      (1) the general responsibility for preparing teachers of the institution of higher education;
      (2) the specific responsibility for preparing teachers of the teacher education component in the college or university; and,
      (3) the responsibility of the schools themselves for preparing new teachers.
   b) What ought to be the responsibility and role of the college or university for the conditions of work under which the teachers it prepares must work? (Please note that, for reasons of time, I will not address this issue in my remarks today. Nonetheless, I believe it is as important to be addressed by colleges and universities as is the issue of preparing teachers.)

C. Characteristics of Teachers in Schools as They are Envisioned in National Studies

Rather than focusing on specific recommendations for teacher education from various individual studies, and they are few, I have attempted to synthesize them and to derive others from what these studies expect of teachers. From this analysis, I will outline a set of general implications for teacher education.

In my review of the findings and recommendations from some twenty nationally-focused studies about schools that have emerged over the past two years, I have identified eight (8) characteristics about teachers that bear on teacher education. Please remember that these characteristics are not explicit in all or, indeed, many of these reports. Instead, they are derived from them, but, in my judgment, they are consistent with the various perspectives and visions found in these reports. In short, I believe them to be generic to most of the studies, if not specific to each of them. The eight characteristics are:

1. A teacher should be a generally well-educated person.
2. A teacher should be an intellectually curious person and a person interested in others.
3. A teacher should know well the subject matter he/she is expected to teach.
4. A teacher should know and support the essential character of the American society - its history, its economic, political, and social systems, its democratic principles of equity, equality, and participation; and, in that context, the character of its public schools, and its evolving academic mission to prepare students to learn, to work, and to engage as citizens.
5. A teacher should understand how the student learns - how he/she comes to learn and why. In short, the teacher needs to understand learners - their development, their circumstances, their cultures, and their modes of learning.

6. A teacher should be the pedagogical manager or "coach" and not the "worker" or "player" for learning - that is the role of the student.
7. A teacher should be a continuous learner - about his/her academic responsibilities, pedagogy, constituents - and be active in the intellectual life of the society.
8. A teacher should be able to look forward to a career in teaching - one which allows for variation and increased responsibilities and rewards.

D. The Eight Teacher Characteristics and Their Implications for Teacher Preparation

What follows are brief outlines of what I believe makes up the characteristics I have listed, and what seem to be the implications for colleges, universities, and schools for preparing teachers to have such characteristics.

1. The Teacher as a Generally Well Educated Person

a. Premise - The teacher should be a person who is "at home" and secure in the world of knowledge; one who understands generally the major academic disciplines well enough to participate, albeit modestly, in their affairs; one who can serve as an "academic" or "learned" role model for students; one who has this general education to undergird one's specific instructional assignment.

b. Program Prerequisite - Candidates who have completed, or soon will complete, a solid general or liberal education at the collegiate level; candidates who have a broad education in the arts, the humanities, mathematics, and the physical, biological and social sciences to the extent that he/she has a reasonable knowledge and conceptual base about them and their relationships to one another

and to society. The implication here is more toward the general or liberal collegiate education and not to that of teacher education *per se*.

c. Undergraduate/Graduate - Not conclusive, but most reports lean heavily on a teacher having a substantial general education. Given present circumstances, that may mean more five-year programs (or fifth-year programs) and fewer four-year ones.

2. The Teacher as an Intellectually Curious Person and One who is Interested in Others.

a. Premise - Education is essentially an intellectual activity, especially for developing such critical skills as inquiry and problem-solving. Intellectually curious people tend to foster curiosity and inquiry in others, and are themselves more interesting and interested persons. For teachers, intellectual curiosity -- that behavior and the skill to inquire -- is as fundamental as is the teacher's interest in helping others.

b. Recruitment - The need to encourage candidates who have demonstrated curiosity and inquiry in intellectual matters, in learning, and in others.

c. Admissions - The need to find ways and means to identify the intellectually curious students who wish to be teachers, particularly among the more academically able ones. At the least, it is thought, the more academically able is the pool from which to start this search.

3. The Teacher as a Knowledgeable Person about What He/She Teaches

a. Premise - A teacher is expected to teach something, namely, a field of content or subject or subjects. As such, a teacher should have

mastery of the subject matter as follows: 1) scope (breadth and comprehensiveness) of the academic discipline; 2) depth (the level of scholarly quality, particularly in the structure and tools of the discipline and how its knowledge is produced and tested); 3) coherence (the degree to which the teacher can reconstruct the conceptual structure and organization of knowledge from a program of study); and, 4) diversity (the adequacy of preparation in related subject areas from his/her general education).

b. Program - A concentration in a discipline or field of study that is conceived and carried out by faculty in that discipline in ways to assure mastery of it. The implication for secondary school teachers (or single subject matter specialists) is more clear than it is for elementary teachers (or multi-subject matter teachers). It calls for: (1) faculty in the disciplines to have a well-conceived concentration of course work that allows for mastery and not merely an accumulaton of courses in the area; and, 2) a concentration that "fits" with a person's general or liberal education. This characteristic is somewhat like that of the one about general education except that it is concentrated in a single discipline or, in some cases, two related ones, perhaps (e.g., the double major).

4. The Teacher as Part of the Society and a Profession

a. Premise - The American school exists and functions in the context of the American society. Therefore, its teachers need to know their responsibilities with regard to the further economic, social, and political development of the nation and, increasingly, that development in the larger world context. Further, the academic or intellectual mission of the American school is rooted in social and

moral thought from throughout history. For American schools, that mission is also rooted in a context of equal opportunity and equity for those it serves and for those who serve it. American education is distinctive and has evolved over time from these roots and those of American political, economic and social history. Teachers are a part of that history and that character.

b. Program - Teachers will need to know about the political, economic and social systems of American society and education's relations to them. Also a teacher should know the philosophical underpinnings of American education and its evolution from those roots to better understand its current place and role in the society. This seems to imply a greater emphasis on a broad historical knowledge and on ethical and philosophical thought and social justice. The responsibility for the development of this component seems pointed primarily to faculty in relevant academic disciplines of a college or university, and not, per se, to its teacher education component.

5. The Teacher Knowing the Student

a. Premise - Teachers are teaching an increasingly diverse range of students. They need especially to know how students develop and learn, both individually and collectively.

b. Program - More emphasis on understanding children and adolescents from broader social science perspectives including, for example, those of anthropology, history and sociology, in addition to that of psychology, which currently is too dominant and, understandably, too limited. This component also seems to imply a need for more emphasis on how individuals learn and under what individual and

broader contextual circumstances. Once more, the implication is that such knowledge and training will be the responsibility of faculty in relevant academic discliplines throughout the college community rather than per se to its teacher education component.

6. The Teacher as a Pedagogical Manager or Coach

   a. Premise - Emphasis on helping others to acquire and understand knowledge and undergirding concepts in the knowledge base to allow for inquiry and for solving problems. Less emphasis on the teacher as the source of knowledge per se.

   b. Program - Fewer specialized courses in methods. Instead, the teacher should have a broader knowledge base and understanding about sources of knowledge and curricula, and about ways to deliver it (e.g., media, technology). Teachers to be trained more in the mode of "coaching," rather than in the formal lecture or knowledge-giving mode. More of this pedagogical training should be in clinical, rather than in academic, settings. More direct collaboration and work with teachers who already are able managers or coaches of learning by students. This could (or should) lead to more close and sustaining collaborative arrangements between colleges and schools in the clinical or pedagogical training of teachers.

7. The Teacher as a Continuous Learner

a. Premise - As new knowledge, new technologies for instruction, new pedagogical problems and the like arise, the teaching role changes. A teacher who is constantly learning and improving his/her knowledge base, pedagogical skills, and overall teaching capacity is more able to meet new challenges and to better assess and use new tools for instruction.

b. Program - Schools would be expected to build more sustaining and systematic on-the-job teacher development activities. More of it will be school-based or school-focused, rather than campus-focused. (Exception: upgrading knowledge in subject areas for specialist teachers.) It is expected that teachers will receive more help from peers and colleagues in their schools rather than from outside specialists, such as those in teacher education units or specialists in central offices of school systems. Arrangements will change in school to allow for on-the-job teacher development to take place on a regular basis, e.g., time for teacher exchanges, observation of others. Perhaps more study and sabbatical leave opportunities for teachers. Also, more leadership by principals is expected in managing instructional and teacher development programs. Finally, teachers will be expected to participate more broadly in the intellectual life of the community, beyond that strictly related to teaching. To accomplish this would mean (1) viewing teachers as peers with other professionals - less separation, for example, of math teachers from mathematicians and other math-related professionals, and, (2) opportunities for teachers to produce intellectual property (e.g., to write, to advise).

8. The Teacher as a Career Person

a. Premise - There is little opportunity for a teacher to advance and be rewarded as a teacher without leaving the classroom. Teachers should not have to leave teaching to advance themselves professionally. New arrangements need to be made for teachers to advance and be rewarded for teaching and for other responsibilities related to teaching while teaching.

b. Program -

(1) Merit schemes. Evaluating teacher's performance in the context of the performance of other teachers and/or in relation to individual student goals. One may also assume that part of the judgment about merit might be related to a teacher's personal initiative in further development such as courses taken at institutes and colleges, not unlike current schemes of added salary increments for college credits earned. If so, that could build a market for colleges, but I assume more in academic, rather than professional, courses.

(2) Career ladder schemes. The advancement of teachers from "beginning" level to "master" level. Perhaps, again, part of the assessment will be based on the teacher's self-initiated further development (e.g., college courses). Also could mean that a teacher would have to acquire skills to supervise others. Training for the latter might also involve college level courses - perhaps, more for professional, rather than academic, courses.

(3) Differentiated teaching roles. Creating different kinds of roles for some practicing teachers enables them to help other teachers

while still teaching (full or reduced load). This implies identifying some teachers who would serve as resources for staff development of other teachers in their schools, as, for example, (a) a teacher who also is a scholar in a discipline, (b) a teacher who also is a trainer of other teachers, and, (c) a teacher who also is skilled in classroom research. Each might be given time and/or added salary incentives (e.g., subsidized "chairs") to use their specialties to assist other teachers. Teachers with such specialties and having such arrangements might be used to replace other specialists now found in teacher education programs, e.g., those who supervise interns, conduct on-the-job workshops, develop curriculum, etc. as well as some staff specialists now found in central offices of school systems. Teachers with these specialties, particularly those in scholarship or research, should also be more able to relate more directly to academic specialists, e.g., scholars in the disciplines, researchers in universities, without having to go through intermediaries, e.g., curriculum supervisors, teacher education faculty.

Please note that in outlining these expected teacher characteristics and their implications for teacher education, I have not made any mention about research bearing on them. By and large, the national studies did not address the area of research in their reviews and recommendations for improving schools and teachers in them. This omission is understandable for the studies did not focus on either research in general or specifically on the role research does or might play to change schools. Certainly, some of them used research data and findings (their own and that of others) to present the current state of schools and to

reinforce some of their recommendations. However, with an exception or two, the studies about schools are moot on the matter of research as it bears or might bear on improving schools or preparing teachers.

E. General Summary for Teacher Education

1. Before being a candidate for teacher education, a person should already be, or should be well on the way to being, generally well-educated. There is no consensus whether or not that implies completion of college before teacher education or during it but, increasingly, it seems to add up to more than four years to develop a teacher. Also, this characteristic of a well-educated teacher has implications for current liberal or general undergraduate education.

2. Clearly, there is an expectation that teacher education will recruit and select more academically able, more suitable (e.g., intellectually curious) candidates from the pool of students who are well-educated. The quarrel is not over quality in general, but, rather, what "qualities" should be sought.

3. Beyond the general education level, developing a teacher's professional knowledge base will be more the responsibility of the whole college and university rather than in the teacher education component, especially in the areas of:

   a) philosophy, history, economics and political science (re the American society and the role of education in it);
   b) the social sciences, especially about children and adolescents and how they develop and learn; and,
   c) the academic disciplines for subject matter teacher specialists (particularly for secondary school teachers).

4. Professional or clinical training for teachers will be less dependent on teacher education faculty and, instead, will be more collaborative between such faculty with real schools and teachers in them in the following ways:
   a) learning how to teach, particularly how to manage and coach learners;
   b) continuing to learn and develop on-the-job;
   c) advancing one's career as a teacher continuing to teach.

In short, there seem to be expectations that the colleges and universities in general, rather than their teacher education components alone, along with the schools themselves, should take more responsibility for preparing teachers. This broadened responsibility could mean that the teacher education unit in higher education will be less responsible for directly providing all or the bulk of the programs to prepare teachers. However, it may need to take on added--and in some cases, new--responsibility, namely, to be a more effective coordinator between mainstream college faculty and school personnel to monitor their collective work to produce quality teachers. To repeat, the teacher education unit will not be expected to carry as much of the direct responsibility for preparing and helping teachers as it now has. That, alone, could lead to various possibilities for the future construction of teacher education units in terms of size and kinds of faculty, assignments, and programs. If neither the general college nor university community nor the schools accept what appears to be their emerging collaborative responsibilities for preparing teachers, it could lead to different forms of teacher education such as: (1) a return to separate free-standing collegiate level teacher training institutions; (2) entrepreneurial programs offering various kinds of training institutes, seminars (by existing or new non-profit or profit-making organizations, by school systems themselves, teacher organizations, even state education agencies); or, (3) little or no pre-service teacher

education, leaving those who become teachers to learn solely or almost wholly on-the-job. All are possible; none seems desirable.

F. Learning from Another Study (An aside or a relationship)

Education has not been the only activity that has recently undergone examination and study. Perhaps, the best known "other" recent study of this kind is that about America's best-run companies and businesses, as reported in the best-selling book, In Search of Excellence. That study identified eight basic principles that were perceived as basic to the success of a sample of best-run companies. Perhaps, they are relevant here. In any event, here they are with a comment or two about their relevance to teacher education and schools.

1. A bias for action - do something, rather than cycles and cycles of analysis and reports. (At the very least, this implies a need for higher education officials, especially those reponsible for educating teachers, to actively lead and do, and not only to study and advise.)
2. Stay close to the customer. (For schools, that's the student; for teacher education, that's the teacher).
3. Autonomy and entrepreneurship - breaking into small units. (The individual school as the locus of teaching and learning which is increasingly apparent from other research, such as that on effective schools and how to improve them, resulting in various school-based management schemes, school site plans.) For teacher education, it could mean preparing teachers and other school-based personnel (e.g., principals) with greater capacities to make instructional decisions.

4. Productivity through people - an awareness in all involved that their best efforts are essential and that they will share in the rewards of success. (To me, that calls for those responsible for teacher education to learn from their products - practicing school personnel - as well as from their learned colleagues.)
5. Hands-on executives. Insisting that the top managers (e.g., deans, presidents, etc.) keep in touch with the enterprise's essential business. (In this instance, that essential business is preparing teachers and improving schools.)
6. Stick to the knitting - staying with the business or program the enterprise knows and does best. (In this instance, that means educating teachers, first, and conducting research related to that, and research about learning more generally, to support the effort to prepare teachers who can help others to learn.)
7. Simple form, lean staff - few administrative layers, few people at the upper levels. (This, too, has its implicatons for educating teachers, especially for their clinical training and further development on-the-job. The capacity for helping them in both cases needs to be more school-focused, if not, school-based. It does less good when it resides or is focused elsewhere. It also implies that those who help them should probably be among them - in schools - rather than somewhere else - in colleges.)
8. Simultaneous loose-tight properties - fostering a climate in which there is dedication to the central values of the enterprise combined with tolerance for all staff who accept those values. (At the very least, this implies the need for more equal status of teachers with those in higher education. They are not "teachers as students;" they are peers. It also implies, for me anyway, academic, intellectual, or professional freedom for teachers,

not unlike that so properly and zealously guarded by those in higher education.)

These principles derived from successful businesses may not be directly "on the mark," but they are hardly unrelated to the health and well-being and usefulness of any enterprise, including that of teacher education. In short, they affirm that the chances of success are greater when an enterprise knows what to do and why; when it focuses on that task and does it well; when it keeps the task as simple as possible; when it uses its resources to do what its resources must do to accomplish the task; and by engendering trust. Trust, now there's a novel base on which to build efforts to prepare teachers.

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